

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
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USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMCONSUL ZAGREB
AMCONSUL MUNICH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 BELGRADE 0708

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV PINT YO
SUBJ: POTPOURRI OF POLITICAL NEWS

1. LEADERSHIP CHANGES AND CHARACTERISTICS. IN ADDITION TO PREVIOUS REPORTING OF RUMORS ABOUT CHANGES IN THIS PRE-PARTY CONGRESS PERIOD, WE HAVE THE FOLLOWING: VARIOUS FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS HAVE STATED FLATLY THAT MINIC WILL NOT REMAIN AS FOREIGN SECRETARY AND SEVERAL HAVE SPECULATED THAT HE WILL RETURN TO A POSITION IN SERBIA. WE ARE GETTING CONTRADICTORY SIGNALS ON GLIGOROV'S FATE, WITH SOME YUGOSLAVS CONVINCED HE WILL REMAIN AS ASSEMBLY PRESIDNET WHILE OTHERS THINK HE WILL MOVE. WELL INFORMED EASTERN EUROPEAN DIPLOMATS UNDERSTAND THAT THERE WILL BE NO CHANGES IN REPUBLICAN PARTY PRESIDENTS EXCEPT MIKULIC IN BOSNIA.

THE THRUST OF RUMORS IS THAT THE TEAM WHICH HAS
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BEEN IN PLACE SINCE 1972 WILL REMAIN LARGELY INTACT BOTH AT THE FEDERAL AND REPUBLICAN LEVELS. AT THE SAME TIME THE IMPORTANCE OF THE YOUNGER MEMBERS OF THAT TEAM IS GROWING. AS DOLANC REMARKED IN A RECENT INTERVIEW:
"THE AVERAGE AGE OF PARTY MEMBERS IS 36 YEARS AND TWO THIRDS OF THEM HAVE JOINED THE PARTY RANKS DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS. AS REGARDS THE AVERAGE AGE OF THE

LEADERS OF THE PARTY IT IS 51 YEARS AND IS THE LOWEST AS COMPARED WITH ALL OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES." WHILE DOLANC DOES NOT STATE HOW BROADLY HE DEFINES "LEADERS," ONE CAN DEFINE A GROUP MOSTLY IN THEIR 50'S WHO THE PAST FEW YEARS AND THE NEXT PARTY CONGRESS ARE MAKING THE POST-TITO LEADERSHIP CADRE. TITO IS THE ONLY ONE LEFT OF HIS GENERATION AND THE NEXT, KARDELJ-BAKARIC-STAMBOLIC GENERATION IS PHYSICALLY FEEBLE (THOUGH IT WOULD STILL WIELD VERY CONSIDERABLE POWER IF TITO DIED IN NEXT FEW YEARS). BUT, THE MEN WHO RUMOR PREDICTS WILL BE NAMED THIS YEAR TO RUN THE DAY TO DAY AFFAIRS OF THE CENTRAL PARTY APPARATUS -- DOLANC, BILIC, MIKULIC -- ARE ALL IN THEIR 50'S AND ALL VIGOROUS, HARD-NOSED, PRACTICAL POLITICAL OPERATORS. ALTHOUGH DEFENSE SECRETARY LJUBICIC IS 62 HE SHARES MUCH IN COMMON WITH THEM. EACH REPUBLIC HAS SIMILAR TYPES. THEY DO NOT HAVE ENORMOUS PERSONAL POPULARITY IN THE COUNTRY, NOR ARE THEY INCLINED TO LEAD THE COUNTRY IN ANY RADICALLY NEW DIRECTION, BUT THEY ARE AN EFFICIENT AND TOUGH-MINDED GROUP OF MEN NOT LIKELY TO SHAKE IN THE FACE OF INTERNAL INSTABILITY OR EXTERNAL PRESSURE.

2. RUMORED DIFFERENCES BETWEEN DOLANC AND KARDELJ. EASTERN EUROPEAN DIPLOMATS HERE HAVE BEEN FULL OF SPECULATION FOR SEVERAL MONTHS ABOUT SUPPOSED DIFFERENCES BETWEEN DOLANC AND KARDELJ. FOR EXAMPLE, A POLISH DIPLOMAT RECENTLY CONFIDENTIAL

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COMMENTED TO US AS FOLLOWS: "DESPITE EARLIER HAVING PROMISED PUBLICATION OF VARIOUS DOCUMENTS ON THE THEMES OF THE 11TH LCY CONGRESS, THE YUGOSLAVS HAVE NOT ISSUED ANYTHING PUBLICLY YET. IT APPEARS THAT THERE IS A CONFLICT UNDERWAY BETWEEN THOSE SUPPORTING A CONTINUATION OF A CADRE-PARTY AND THOSE SUPPORTING MOVEMENT IN THE DIRECTION OUTLINED BY KARDELJ IN HIS BOOK PUBLISHED LAST FALL. IT IS CLEAR THAT NEITHER SIDE HAS COME OUT AHEAD YET. AND INTERESTINGLY TITO HIMSELF HAS NOT MADE ONE PUBLIC COMMENT EITHER FOR OR AGAINST THE THESES PUT FORWARD IN KARDELJ'S BOOK. IT IS NOT EVEN CLEAR WHERE DOLANC STANDS BUT VERY LIKELY, HE IS SOMEWHERE IN THE MIDDLE AWAITING A FINAL OUTCOME. HIS

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 BELGRADE 0708

PRAGMATISM CAN BE ILLUSTRATED BY ONE OF HIS COMMENTS IN
HIS "NOVA MAKEDONIJA" INTERVIEW AT THE END OF LAST
YEAR WHICH IN EFFECT SAID THAT THEORY IS ONLY THEORY
BUT IT IS PRACTICE WHICH IS IMPORTANT."

A HUNGARIAN DIPLOMAT NOTED TO US THAT PRIOR
TO THE PUBLICATION OF KARDELJ'S BOOK DOLANC HAD BEEN
SETTING THE PUBLIC STAGE FOR THE PARTY CONGRESS AND
LABELING IT A CONGRESS OF "ACTION." SINCE THE BOOK'S
PUBLICATION, THERE HAS BEEN MUCH DISCUSSION OF
PLURALISM AND DEMOCRACY. BUT NOW THE HUNGARIAN SEES
A TURNING AWAY FROM THIS FOCUS AND A RETURN TO
CONCENTRATION ON STRENGTHENING THE PARTY'S ROLE -- WHICH
HE PREDICTS WILL BE THE MAIN THRUST OF THE CONGRESS
ITSELF. KARDELJ'S FAILURE TO CONSULT FULLY AND INVOLVE
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THE LEADERSHIP IN WRITING HIS BOOK LED HIM TO "GO BEYOND
WHAT WAS EXPECTED OF HIM". HIS DECLINING HEALTH, THE HUNGARIAN
BELIEVES, ALSO HAS PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN DOLANC EMERGING
ON TOP.

3. KOSOVO AND ITS POSITION IN YUGOSLAVIA. CONTINUED
BELGRADE CONCERN WITH THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC
SITUATION IN KOSOVO WAS REFLECTED IN STATEMENTS BY KIRO
GLIGOROV IN FRONT OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ASSEMBLY OF

KOSOVO, AND IN A "BORBA" EDITORIAL, "WHAT IS OBSTRUCTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNDERDEVELOPED?", BOTH OF WHICH APPEARED ON JANUARY 20.

GLIGOROV OBSERVED THAT GREAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE BY THE KOSOVARS BUT THAT THE PROVINCE IS DROPPING FURTHER BEHIND THE REST OF THE COUNTRY IN DEVELOPMENT. HE FAVORS KOSOVO CONTINUING TO ENJOY A SPECIAL TREATMENT DESIGNED TO REDUCE THE DIFFERENCE IN DEVELOPMENT IN COMPARISON WITH THE REST OF THE COUNTRY. HE EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE STABLE POLITICAL SITUATION IN KOSOVO DESPITE THE "COMPLEX SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION" AND STATED THAT THE "CONSTRUCTIVE AND EQUAL" PARTICIPATION BY KOSOVARS IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND OTHER NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WAS A FACTOR WHICH PROMOTED STABILITY IN YUGOSLAVIA AS WELL AS IN KOSOVO.

THE EDITORIAL BY M. TOMASEVIC (A SERB) CITED THE MEASURES WHICH HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO BRING THE ECONOMY OF KOSOVO MORE IN LINE WITH THE REST OF THE COUNTRY, EMPHASIZING THAT "TOOLS" HAVE BEEN MADE AVAILABLE THERE WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN AVAILABLE ELSEWHERE. TOMASEVIC GOES ON TO ECHO GLIGOROV'S OBSERVATION ON THE WIDENING DEVELOPMENT GAP BETWEEN KOSOVO AND THE REST OF THE COUNTRY.

ADMITTING THAT THERE ARE REAL PROBLEMS SUCH AS A RAPIDLY GROWING POPULATION, POOR LINES OF COMMUNICATION, CONFIDENTIAL

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ETC. WHICH INHIBIT DEVELOPMENT, THE WRITER ARGUES THAT THE REAL ROOT OF THE PROBLEM LIES IN INAPPROPRIATE ORGANIZATION OF KOSOVO'S ECONOMY WHICH PUTS TOO GREAT A RELIANCE ON THE "FUND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF UNDERDEVELOPED AREAS." THE REAL ANSWER THEREFORE, HE ARGUES, LIES IN GREATER AND STRONGER ASSOCIATION OF THE ECONOMY OF KOSOVO WITH DEVELOPED PARTS OF YUGOSLAVIA. WHILE NOT ADVOCATING ABOLISHING THE "FUND" OR OTHER SIMILAR BENEFITS, HE IMPLIES, ITS IMPORTANCE OUGHT TO BE DEEMPHASIZED.

IN MUCH OF THE RECENT PUBLICITY CONCERNING KOSOVO THERE HAS BEEN THIS OUTWARD AIR OF OBJECTIVE SELF-EXAMINATION BUT WITH A SOMETIMES UNDERLYING TONE OF BITTER CRITICISM. THIS CRITICISM CHARGES THAT THE KOSOVARS HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO IMPROVE THEIR LOT, EVEN WITH THE MASSIVE ASSISTANCE WHICH HAS BEEN GIVEN THEM. THIS IS A REFLECTION OF SERBIAN DISCONTENT WITH THE GROWING POWER OF ALBANIANS IN KOSOVO, AND THEIR FEELING THAT THEY COULD DO THE JOB BETTER. THERE IS ALSO APPARENTLY A CERTAIN FEELING IN THE DEVELOPED AREAS OF THE COUNTRY THAT THE FUNDS THAT ARE PUT INTO THE "FUND" ARE MISUSED AND WASTED AND THAT THEY COULD BE BETTER USED BY THE DONORS. THE RESULT IS AN INCREASE IN NATIONAL CHAUVINISM AND CONCERN ON THE PART OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT THAT THESE TENSIONS COULD LEAD TO INSTABILITY,

HENCE GLIGOROV'S "SATISFACTION" WITH THE STABILITY OF THE
POLITICAL SITUATION OF THE PROVINCE, AND HIS ENCOURAGING

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WORDS ABOUT THE CONTINUING IMPORTANCE OF KOSOVO'S PARTICIPATION
IN NATIONAL AND SERBIAN REPUBLIC LEVEL ORGANIZATIONS AND
GOVERNMENT.

4. ONE OF THE STRIKING DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE YUGOSLAV
PARTY AND THE CPSU IS ITS LAEADERS' WILLINGNESS TO FACE
WESTERN REPORTERS ON THE RECORD. IN THE PRE-PARTY
CONGRESS PERIOD EACH OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY PRESIDNETS
WILL BE MEETING IN BELGRADE WITH THE FOREIGN PRESS CORPS.
CROATIA'S MILKA PLANINC LED OFF THIS SERIES ON JAN 27 AND
FIELDLED QUESTIONS ON SUCH SENSITIVE ISSUES AS THE
"PRAXIS" GROUP'S PETITION AGAINST MORAL-POLITICAL
SUITABILITY AS A REQUIREMENT FOR JOBSON THE PARTY'S
RELATIONSHIP TO THE CHURCH AND THE NUMBER OF CROATIAN
COMMUNISTS PURGED IN 1971 (SHE CLAIMED 12-1300 TOTAL,
AND 260 IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS FROM THE REPUBLIC LEVEL
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TO SECRETARIES OF BASIC ORGANIZATIONS). BOTH THE REPORTERS' POINTED QUESTIONS AND HER FAIRLY CANDID ANSWERS WERE PUBLISHED IN THE YUGOSLAV PRESS.

5. DURING THE AMBASSADOR'S RECENT VISIT TO NOVI SAD, SEVERAL OF THE LEADERS HE MET WERE EXTREMELY CANDID IN EXPRESSING UNHAPPINESS OVER WHAT THEY CONSIDERED TO BE VOJVODINA'S LESS THAN PROPER ECONOMIC SHARE THROUGH ITS CONTINUING REQUIREMENT TO SUPPORT THE LESS DEVELOPED AREAS. PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT VILMOS MOLNAR WAS PARTICULARLY OUTSPOKEN ON THE SUBJECT. HE REMARKED THAT BEFORE WWII VOJVODINA WAS THE SECOND MOST ECONOMICALLY ADVANCED REGION IN THE COUNTRY. IT DROPPED TO SIXTH POSITION MAINLY BECAUSE OF A DECISION IN 1948 NOT TO INVEST IN VOJVODINA DUE TO ITS VULNERABILITY (OBVIOUSLY TO THE SOVIETS). THE PROVINCE HAS MANAGED TO PULL ITSELF UP TO THIRD PLACE BY ITS OWN EFFORTS AND NOT THOSE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. IN THIS RESEPCT MANY REFERENCES WERE MADE DURING THE AMBASSADOR'S MEETINGS TO VOJVODINA FEEDING THE REMAINDER OF THE COUNTRY. COMMENT: THIS SORT OF COMPLAINT IS HEARD MORE OFTEN IN CROATIA, AND RARELY IN VOJVODINA. THAT SEVERAL HIGH LEVEL OFFICIALS SAW FIT TO MENTION IT WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE MORE CONCERN ON THEIR PART THAN HAS BEEN APPARENT TO NOW.
END COMMENT.
EAGLEBURGER

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